REMARKS

Claim 12 has been amended. Claims 12-22 remain in the application.

Independent claim 12 had been previously amended for purposes of clarity and, in that sense, the base body was indicated to comprise a bottom area, a middle part, and a top end. It is believed that this language is not sufficiently precise and has permitted the Examiner to make what applicants believe are inappropriate rejections in the present Office Action. As claim 12 now has been amended, reference to bottom area, middle part, and top end have been deleted. Instead, the base body or stand comprises a stage support; a first part holding an observation unit; a second part holding an illumination unit; and a third part holding a supporting cell, the third part connecting the first and the second part. The base body or stand also comprises a guide for adjusting the stage support or an objective changer device with inserted objectives; and a stage for holding the object or specimen. The microscope portion of claim 12 now sets forth that it comprises a supporting cell being provided and being connected to the third part of the stand, preferably rigidly, but so as to be exchangeable; and a first assembly provided for receiving, holding and adjusting the objective, and a second assembly being provided for positioning the object or specimen relative to the objective. The first and second assembly are attached to the supporting cell. Further, it is stated in claim 12 that the supporting cell is a single structure. It should be understood that the language of claim 12 has been clarified so that both embodiments set forth in the specification are covered by this claim.

As set forth in applicants' specification, the primary object of the invention is to minimize the influence of mechanical and thermal factors on the imaging quality and image transmission characteristics in a microscope, to improve the dynamic behavior of the mechanical assemblies and to achieve a microscope construction which saves on material and reduces costs. The essential feature of applicants' invention resides in the supporting cell which serves as a good damping support of shocks and/or vibrations between the stand and the cell. Reference is made to paragraph [0010] of the specification. Further aspects of the supporting cell are set forth in paragraph [0014], [0018] and [0019]. It should be noted, in particular, that in paragraph [0019], the rigorous separation between supporting components and holding components results in

appreciably higher resonant frequencies of the supporting cell and, therefore, in smaller amplitudes of the relative movements between the objective and object, and in a shorter decay time for amplitudes with comparable interference functions in the form of shock excitations on the microscope body. Further aspects and advantages of the supporting cell are set forth in paragraphs [0020], [0021] and [0022] of the specification. In other words, the supporting cell of the present invention is directed to all of the combined features and advantages set forth above and has been described as element 7 of Fig. 1 and element 36 of Fig. 2.

It should also be noted that Rosenberger, U.S. Patent No. 4,168,881, has been identified in paragraph [0007] of the present specification as known prior art. Applicants believe that they have patentably distinguished their invention from the teachings of Rosenberger with the additional help of the modifications to claim 12. The claimed invention now requires a first part for holding an observation unit and a second part for holding an illumination unit. A third part connects the first and second part for holding a supporting cell. The claim requires that the supporting cell is provided and is connected to the third part of the stand, preferably rigidly so as to be exchangeable.

The Examiner has rejected applicants' invention, set forth in claims 12 and 13, under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by Rosenberger. In particular, the Examiner states that the microscope, in Rosenberger, comprises a supporting cell (14) being provided and being connected to the "middle part" of the stand preferably rigidly but so as to be exchangeable. It is believed that this statement is incorrect insofar as Rosenberger's pillar 14 provides that the upper stand part 42 is substantially mechanically decoupled from the rest of the stand. Please note in this regard the air gap between elements 24 and 42 (see Fig. 3). The construction of pillar 14 has been stated to be constructed with thick walls, note reference to column 2, lines 60-62, of Rosenberger stating "The pillar 14 must not be flimsy. Relatively thick material is employed for its walls in order to maximize rigidity." This appears to contradict the disclosure of a supporting cell provided and being connected to a third part of the stand (as now claimed) preferably rigidly but so as to be exchangeable. Further, the mere reference to "top," "middle" and "bottom" of the stand in Rosenberger has no significance to claim 12, as now set forth. Accordingly, the

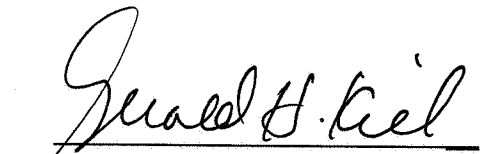
rejection under 35 U.S.C. § 102 is believed to be overcome.

Claims 14 and 15 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Rosenberger in view of Kanao et al. Rosenberger has been indicated to be an insufficient reference as to the basic features of applicants' invention as set forth in claim 12. Claims 14 and 15 present additional aspects of the supporting cell arrangement which provide the advantages spelled out above. It is not believed there is any teaching in Kanao et al or Rosenberger which would suggest the meager disclosures of Kanao et al to one of ordinary skill in the art for any reasonable combination. Accordingly, it is believed that claims 14 and 15 have allowable subject matter and should also be allowed.

Claim 20 has been rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Rosenberger in view of Weiss. This claim is also allowable in view of the clear distinctions of Rosenberger as set forth above.

In view of the above, it is submitted that applicants' claimed invention, as now set forth, clearly and patentable distinguishes over the cited prior art which does not teach or suggest the inventive features. Claims 12-22 are therefore considered allowable over the art of record and the application should be passed to issue.

Respectfully submitted,



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